

OCT 124/11

TOP SECRET/NODIS [redacted]

9

WASHINGTON SPECIAL ACTIONS GROUP MEETING

October 8, 1973

Time and Place: 5:55 - 6:25 p.m., White House Situation Room

SUBJECT: Middle East

Participants:

Chairman: Henry A. Kissinger

CIA: William Colby

State: Kenneth Rush
Joseph Sisco

Treasury: William Simon

Defense: James Schlesinger
William P. Clements, Jr.

NSC Staff: Brig. Gen. Brent Scowcroft
William Quandt
Lt. Col. Donald Stukel
Jeanne W. Davis

JCS: Adm. Thomas H. Moorer
Vice Adm. John P. Weinel

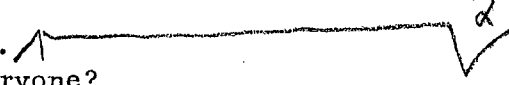
EX-100-100000-100000

TOP SECRET/NODIS [redacted]

TOP SECRET/NODIS []

2 OCT 124/2

Secretary Kissinger: These Egyptians! I've had a series of phone conversations with Zayyat on the Security Council action. He announced that I had given him an ultimatum. I called him again, went over what I said word for word, told him it was not an ultimatum, and he announced that I had withdrawn my ultimatum. And we have been saying exactly the same thing all the time.

(attached). 

Bill (Colby), I've read your latest report/ Has everyone?

All had.

Secretary Kissinger: Do you have anything to add?

Mr. Colby: Not really.

Secretary Kissinger: Tom (Moorer), what's your military assessment?

Adm. Moorer: I agree with Bill Colby. Israel is moving on the Golan Heights. They are having a little more difficulty in the south. They're not across the Canal yet. But General Salan, with a reinforced armored division, is attacking all along the line, and the Corps Commander is leading another division attacking the Canal. There is a lot of Israeli helo activity. The momentum is reversing. Tomorrow will be a very active day. Today the Israelis flew over 400 sorties, which is quite an effort considering the number of aircraft they have. They seem to have suppressed the missile activity. They claim they've taken out about 80% of the missiles but I don't think it's quite that high.

Secretary Kissinger: They're losing a lot to the SA-6's.

Adm. Moorer: Yes, for two reasons. They're mobile and they can't find the launchers. Also, we have never been able to get sufficient information about them to develop any good countermeasures. They're low-level missiles and were first deployed around the Aswan Dam. The Russians gave the Syrians 1000 missiles -- SA-2's, 3's and 6's. Egypt has 3600 missiles along the Canal and around Cairo and the airfields. They account for most of the Israeli losses. The Israelis are flying low for ground support of their troops. You remember they withdrew some air from the Golan Heights so as not to interfere with their ground forces and their tanks. The T-62 tanks have been committed but they were stopped by the Israelis. They are the latest tanks with the 115mm gun. The Israelis knocked them out.

Secretary Kissinger: How many tanks did the Syrians have?

Adm. Moorer: 270.

Secretary Kissinger: How many does Egypt have?

TOP SECRET/NODIS []

TOP SECRET/NODIS [redacted]

3 OCT 124/3

Mr. Colby: They add up to about 400.

Adm. Moorer: A little more than 100.

Mr. Schlesinger: The Soviets are going to see \$2-3 billion worth of their equipment going up in smoke again. At the moment, they do not seem disposed to replace it. If they don't, Israel has military supremacy. If we replace Israeli equipment losses, it might trigger the Soviets to replace equipment lost by the Egyptians and Syrians. If they are deterred from replacing that equipment it might be desirable for us to hold off replacing the Israeli equipment.

Mr. Colby: This is the third time around for the Soviets.

Secretary Kissinger: You think they are going to lose it all?

Mr. Schlesinger: Yes. In ordinary battle they would lost 6-700 tanks. The Syrians are alleged to be in flight from Golan.

Mr. Colby: Yes, the Israelis have essentially reoccupied the Golan Heights.

Mr. Schlesinger: The Israelis will mop up the equipment tomorrow.

Secretary Kissinger: The Arab mind is hard for me to fathom. In any rational strategy, they would have asked for a ceasefire Saturday/night. To plead with us not to ask for a ceasefire is to ask for their total destruction. I don't understand them. ✓³

Adm. Moorer: They are lulled by their initial success and they think it will continue. Sadat has so much as said so.

Mr. Schlesinger: The Israelis are likely to cross the Canal and mop up the SAM's.

Adm. Moorer: They are saying the Egyptian and Syrian forces will be "totally destroyed."

Mr. Colby: They do have a good capability for commando raids.

Secretary Kissinger: We are well positioned. We have asked for a Security Council meeting. A return to the ceasefire lines will work for the Arabs. We won't change our position. We will stick with it and not leak it. That's all we can do at this moment.

Adm. Moorer: I might just review our own forces. The [redacted] task group is south [redacted]. We've directed the amphibious ships to a training anchorage at [redacted]. They can just stay there; they're just as available there.

TOP SECRET/NODIS [redacted]

~~TOP SECRET/NODIS~~ [redacted]

4 OCT 12/4

Secretary Kissinger: Fine.

Mr. Sisco: It looks better, too.

Adm. Moorer: The Kennedy is entering Edinburgh and will be there for four days.

Secretary Kissinger: Good. I can't go into detail, but we have had several very conciliatory messages from the Soviets today. As of now, I see no chance of its going like 1967 with the Soviets making threatening noises. There is better than a 50-50 chance that we will wind up jointly with the Soviets. That can only help us. I talked to Dobrynin just five minutes before this meeting and we are keeping the atmosphere very calm.

4

Adm. Moorer: We stood down our reconnaissance flights in the Eastern Mediterranean. We are prepared [redacted]
[redacted]

Secretary Kissinger: That's preferable to the U-2?

Mr. Colby: Yes, the U-2 isn't very good for this.

Secretary Kissinger: That's a helluva lot better than the U-2. Will that be picked up on radar?

Mr. Clements: Yes.

Secretary Kissinger: Will it fly over Israel?

Adm. Moorer: Yes. [redacted]

Mr. Clements: It won't be a secret. They'll pick it up on radar and hear the boom.

Adm. Moorer: No, there's no boom.

Mr. Schlesinger: We can put it on alert. It takes 48 hours to get ready. We can cancel within the 48 hours if we want to.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, let's put it on alert. We have 48 hours to stand it down. Joe (Sisco) will you watch that for me?

Mr. Sisco: I'll alert you one way or the other.

~~TOP SECRET/NODIS~~ [redacted]

TOP SECRET/NODIS

5

OCT 124/5

Mr. Schlesinger: We have some supplies at Eskenderun which is within the Syrian "danger zone." We may not need to get anything from there, but if we do, we'll just go ahead and do it.

Secretary Kissinger: Don't pay any attention to the Syrian "danger zone."

Adm. Moorer: We had an exercise scheduled with the Turks around there but we cancelled it. But there's no reason why we can't go in for supplies if we need them.

Secretary Kissinger: No, go on in if you need to.

Mr. Schlesinger: I don't anticipate having to draw on these supplies, except as a contingency. If it were off-limits, we could supply from the Atlantic.

Secretary Kissinger: The Syrians are in no position to do anything about it. You say they have committed 5 divisions? If they lose them all, how many does that leave them?

Adm. Moorer: They have about 100,000 men in uniform.

Mr. Schlesinger: That approach from King Faisal to Hussein to release the Saudi troops in Jordan is troublesome. LS

Secretary Kissinger: We're in contact with the Jordanians. We've sent them two messages. I also have another message making the point even stronger.

Mr. Schlesinger: If Saudi troops go against the Israelis and are chewed up, the reaction will be bad.

Mr. Sisco: I think it's right to take that seriously, but I don't think there is any reality that the Saudi troops will get in.

Secretary Kissinger: If our estimates are correct, by Wednesday/night at the latest, there will be a Security Council resolution. We may hear from the Soviets tomorrow. C

Mr. Colby: The other Arab leaders may have some problems. They may consider this a piece of jackassery by Sadat and Asad, which doesn't necessarily have to involve all good Arabs.

Secretary Kissinger: So far their reaction has been very mild.

Mr. Colby: But if the Egyptians and Syrians get beat up and humiliated, there will be a reaction.

TOP SECRET/NODIS

TOP SECRET/NODIS/ [REDACTED]

6 OCT 124/6

Secretary Kissinger: As soon as the ceasefire line is crossed, we will get a resolution. We have made every move Egypt has requested us to make.

Mr. Schlesinger: Even to withdrawing your ultimatum.

Secretary Kissinger: We have made no move that Egypt has objected to. As late as this afternoon, the New York contingent of Arabs still thought they were winning. I don't know what their capitals think or what their reporting procedures are.

Mr. Schlesinger: The Egyptian military is very concerned but they can't break through the euphoria of Sadat and his circle.

Mr. Clements: Someone said Egypt has a 10-day supply of ammunition, maximum. Is that reliable?

Adm. Moorer: It depends on their rate of expenditure. They have no staying power.

Mr. Colby: They have 10 days' supply with the unit across the Canal.

Adm. Moorer: Neither side can stay for very long. They will both run out. The Russians probably gave them about 10 days of ammo.

Secretary Kissinger: It will wind up by Wednesday or Thursday.

Mr. Colby: The Golan Heights developments are most important. If the Israelis are pushing them back already there, they're about 24 hours ahead of my schedule.

Adm. Moorer: A 10 -day supply of ammo is not unusual.

Mr. Clements: To go to war with, it's unusual.

Adm. Moorer: If they want a short-war strategy, that's one way to get it.

Secretary Kissinger: Do we have any other problems?

Mr. Schlesinger: Hassan is the most worrisome. He has troops in Syria and he believes the US stance has been completely pro-Israel. We have those [REDACTED] that he might try to knock out. He may need some special treatment.

Mr. Sisco: We've done two things. The Secretary has approved a message to Hassan, assuring him that the 6th Fleet movements are purely precautionary. Also we have suggested a brief message for the President to send to Hassan, which is up on the seventh floor for the Secretary's approval. I agree with [REDACTED]

TOP SECRET/NODIS/ [REDACTED]

TOP SECRET/NODIS [redacted]

7 OCT 124/7

you (Schlesinger) that some special treatment of Hassan is required.

Secretary Kissinger: We'll get the Presidential message out before tomorrow morning.

Mr. Colby: [redacted]
[redacted]

Secretary Kissinger: Go ahead.

Mr. Colby: [redacted]

Secretary Kissinger: I'll take that up with the President tonight.

Mr. Schlesinger: We're holding the Roosevelt at Barcelona. The press report that it was moving was wrong.

Secretary Kissinger: Right. Let's not do anything provocative. The Soviets are calm. It's quite different from 1967. They're making no threatening noises, no military moves, no noise in the Security Council, they have agreed to coordinate with us. If the Arabs start to scream, we can say that their friend asked us to hold off. I'll consult you Jim (Schlesinger) and Bill (Colby) early afternoon tomorrow to see if we need a meeting. Scowcroft will keep you all informed.

Mr. Colby: I spend a half-hour with the Senate Armed Services Committee this afternoon.

Mr. Schlesinger: By tomorrow, the Israelis will likely be across the ceasefire line at the Canal and they may move on Port Fuad.

Secretary Kissinger: The Egyptians have filed a formal complaint with the Secretary General saying that Port Said was being bombed. I asked the Secretary General on what principle, and he didn't know.

Mr. Sisco: They may be laying the basis for any bombing they may want to do in a civilian area. There may be activity in Fuad, but the Israelis won't stay there. There's a swamp there, and they don't want to be trapped. They did the same thing in 1967.

Secretary Kissinger: They want to trap what's on their side of the Canal.

Mr. Colby: They want to eliminate the force.

Mr. Schlesinger: They can let that force wither on the vine.

TOP SECRET/NODIS [redacted]

TOP SECRET/NODIS/

⁸ OCT 124/8

Secretary Kissinger: It depends on the timing. As soon as the Arabs wake up to what is happening, there will be no basis for resisting the ceasefire.

Mr. Schlesinger: The Israelis want to get rid of that equipment west of the Canal. They may cross over before the East Bank is wiped up.

Secretary Kissinger: Do they have a parachute division they haven't used yet?

Mr. Colby: Yes.

Adm. Moorer: And helos. They haven't lost as many helos as the Egyptians have.

Secretary Kissinger: How many have the Egyptians lost?

Adm. Moorer: About 20. And we don't know how many the Israelis^t got on the ground.

Mr. Clements: The Hill will be asking questions tomorrow. Who will handle them?

Secretary Kissinger: We've been answering questions right along. There will be no briefing right now. Tell them to call the State Department Operations Center. Let's wait one day.

Mr. Colby: I only got one political question. Senator Jackson asked if it wasn't true that we had good intelligence on this operation and that Israel wanted to launch a preemptive strike and we prevented it. I said "no".

Secretary Kissinger: The Israelis volunteered to us that they would not undertake a preemptive strike.

Mr. Colby: I didn't get into that.

Secretary Kissinger: It's just not true.

Mr. Clements: You ought to think about the Hill. We'll be under lots of pressure.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, but not tomorrow. So far things are going very well. We've kept both the Arabs and the Soviets from blowing at us. It's totally different from 1967. If we wind up with the Arabs and the Soviets staying with us, we'll be doing very well. If we brief the Hill, some jackass will run out and say something pro-Israel. Then we've had it. (Senator) Hugh Scott asked me if I had any objection to their resolution, and I said no. He then announced that I had endorsed it.

TOP SECRET/NODIS/

TOP SECRET/NODIS [redacted]

9 OCT 124/9

Mr. Sisco: The Secretary has talked to several Congressmen and the Operations Center has answered 50 or 60 calls.

Secretary Kissinger: But we are only drawing on the McCloskey briefings. We're giving them nothing that hasn't been said publicly and no military information at all. After Thursday, you can brief all you want. But our biggest effort is to get this thing wrapped up without confrontation with the Arabs or the Soviets. We're okay on the Soviets, but it's still touch and go with the Arabs. ✓ 8

Mr. Sisco: You have the McCloskey briefings and will have the Scali speech at the UN. That gives you a half-dozen detailed public statements to draw on.

Secretary Kissinger: I think this has been a good team effort.

Mr. Schlesinger: I think it is going to turn into a duck-shooting contest.

TOP SECRET/NODIS [redacted]